

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ADP-00 EURE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 GAC-01 TRSE-00 MBFR-03 SAJ-01

IO-12 OIC-04 AEC-11 AECE-00 ACDA-19 OMB-01 RSR-01

EB-11 /166 W

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P 051217 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8953

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS UNN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USNMR SHAPE

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 9497

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PARM, EEC, FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH VIEWS ON EC DISCUSSIONS ON MBFR

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HELSINKI FOR US DEL MPT

VIENNA FOR US REP MBFR

REF: US NATO 1626

1. SUMMARY. QUAI INFORMS US FRENCH WILLINGNESS DISCUSS MBFR IN EC POLITICAL DIRECTORS FORUM DOES NOT CHANGE NEGATIVE FRENCH VIEWS OF MBFR. HOWEVER, FRENCH APPROVAL DOES, WE BELIEVE, REPRESENT ANOTHER SIGN OF GROWING FRENCH INTEREST IN INFLUENCING OUTCOME OF MBFR. QUAI OFFICIAL SAID FRENCH CONTINUE VIEW ALLIANCE AS PRINCIPAL FORUM FOR MBFR CONSULTATION. WE BELIEVE US SHOULD BE NEUTRAL RE WHETHER EC DISCUSSES MBFR, BUT SHOULD MAKE STRONG EFFORT TO ENSURE THAT ANY EC CONSULTATION THIS SUBJECT BECOMES INTERTWINED WITH THAT OF ALLIANCE IN MANNER MAKING ALLIANCE INDISPUTABLY PRIME FORUM. END SUMMARY.

2. QUAI DIRECTOR PACTS AND DISARMAMENT AFFAIRS TOLD EMBOFF APRIL 4 THAT FRENCH WILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS MBFR IN EC POLITICAL DIRECTORS FORUM DID NOT REPRESENT ANY CHANGE IN WELL- KNOWN NEGATIVE FRENCH VIEWS RE MBFR.

3. QUAI OFFICIAL DOWNPLAYED IMPORTANCE OF EC NINE DISCUSSION OF MBFR. NEVERTHELESS, HE APPEARED PLEASED AT GROWING SUPPORT AMONG EUROPEANS FOR " STATIONED FORCES ONLY" MBFR ALONG LINES SUGGESTED BY SCHUMANN AT DECEMBER 1972 NATO MINISTERIAL. HE NOTED INITIATIVE FOR EC DISCUSSION CAME FROM ITALIANS WHO, EXPRESSING CONCERNS RE MBFR WHICH PARALLELED WELL- KNOWN FRENCH VIEWS, HAD APPROACHED FRENCH BEFORE MARCH 30 MEETING IN ORDER OBTAIN FRENCH APPROVAL TO PLACE MBFR ON AGENDA.

4. QUAI OFFICIAL SAID FRENCH ARE NOT SEEKING NEW FORUM IN WHICH TO REITERATE THEIR POSITION. MOREOVER, FRENCH BELIEVE ALLIANCE SHOULD REMAIN PRINCIPAL FORUM FOR CONSULTATION ON MBFR. FRENCH ARE NOT SEEKING TO SUPPLANT IT.

5. EC NINE DISCUSSION, QUAI OFFICIAL CONTINUED, WOULD BE LIMITED TO POTENTIAL POLITICAL IMPACT ON EUROPE OF MBFR AND WOULD NOT DEAL WITH MILITARY ASPECTS. IN CONCLUSION, HE REPEATED COMMENT THAT FRENCH POLICY ON MBFR REMAINS UN- CHANGED. MOREOVER, HE UNDERScoreD, BROAD LINES OF THIS POLICY, CONFIDENTIAL

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INCLUDING FORMER FON MIN SCHUMANN' S SLIGHTLY MORE FORTHCOMING

REMARKS AT DECEMBER 1972 NATO MINISTERIAL MEETING, WILL CONTINUE BE MADE BY PRESIDENT POMPIDOU HIMSELF REGARDLESS OF WHO SUCCEEDS SCHUMANN AND DEBRE.

6. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE FRENCH WILLINGNESS TO PERMIT EC TO DISCUSS IMPLICATIONS OF MBFR FOR FUTURE EUROPEAN POLITICAL UNION REPRESENTS ANOTHER SIGN OF GROWING FRENCH INTEREST IN TRYING TO INFLUENCE MBFR OUTCOME. FRENCH HAVE ALREADY, OF COURSE, USED EC POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS TO HELP SHAPE EC AND ALLIANCE POLICY TOWARDS CSCE, AND MAY THUS SEE SIMILAR POSSIBILITIES RE EC DISCUSSION OF MBFR. EC CONSULTATIONS ON CSCE WE RECALL BEGAN IN RELATIVELY NARROW FRAMEWORK OF IMPACT OF CSCE ON EC DEVELOPMENT AND WAS SUBSEQUENTLY BROADENED TO INCLUDE ENTIRE CSCE ISSUE.

7. NEVERTHELESS, WE EXPECT FRENCH WILL BE FAR MORE CIRCUMSPECT RE MBFR, PARTICULARLY GIVEN THEIR NON- PARTICIPATION AT VIENNA, LETTING ITALIANS AND OTHERS DO THE FRONT- RUNNING. IN ANY EVENT, IT IS SIGNIFICANT IN TERMS OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF EUROPE THAT FRANCE HAS FOR FIRST TIME PERMITTED EC POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS TO DEAL WITH AN ISSUE SO CLOSELY TIED TO DEFENSE MATTERS.

8. AS SEEN FROM PARIS, WE BELIEVE US SHOULD FOLLOW NEUTRAL POLICY RE WHETHER EC DISCUSSES MBFR. ATTEMPTS TO BLOCK SUCH DISCUSSION WOULD PLAY INTO HANDS OF THOSE IN FRANCE (AND PERHAPS ELSEWHERE IN EUROPE) WHO ARE READY TO CHARGE US WITH OPPOSING DEVELOPMENT OF EUROPE AND COLLUDING WITH SOVIETS RE MBFR.

9. ON THE OTHER HAND, AS WE RECOMMENDED OVER A YEAR AGO WHEN EC BEGAN DISCUSSING BROAD CSCE POLICY (PARIS 1414; PARIS 4578), US SHOULD NOT REMAIN NEUTRAL RE SUBSTANCE OF ANY EC CONSULTATION ON SUBJECTS OF VITAL INTEREST TO ENTIRE ALLIANCE. WE BELIEVE FRENCH AND OTHERS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO CONTINUE VIEWING ALLIANCE, INCLUDING, OF COURSE, AD HOC GROUP, AS PRINCIPAL FORUM FOR COORDINATION OF MBFR POLICY. SHOULD EC, HOWEVER, GET INTO DEPTY ON MBFR, WE IN TURN WILL HAVE TO BEGIN PROCESS OF INTERTWINING CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN EC AND ALLIANCE. FRENCH AFTER SOME INITIAL HESITATION, HAVE GENERALLY COOPERATED IN THIS PROCESS RE CSCE. WE BELIEVE THAT BY EMPHASIZING IMPORTANCE TO FRANCE'S CONFIDENTIAL

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OWN SECURITY OF COORDINATED ALLIANCE POSITION RE MBFR, THE FRENCH COULD BE ENCOURAGED TO BE EVEN MORE COOPERATIVE IN MBFR CONTEXT.

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